



Department of Justice

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COLUMBUS BUSINESSMAN RECEIVES ONE-YEAR SENTENCE FOR TRYING TO BRIBE IRS AGENT

COLUMBUS – A Columbus businessman was sentenced to 12 months and one day imprisonment for attempting to bribe an Internal Revenue Service agent assigned to audit his corporate and personal income tax returns. Ming Liou, age 50, and owner of Beta Electronics, was also fined \$10,000 and ordered to forfeit \$5,000 in cash and a designer purse that he used in his bribery attempt.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, and Peter McConney, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA), Chicago Field Office, announced the sentence handed down today by Senior United States District Judge James L. Graham.

According to a statement of facts filed when Liou pled guilty on July 13, 2006, he first met with the IRS agent assigned to audit his personal and corporate tax returns at Liou's home on July 11, 2005. Liou operates the business out of his home. Liou offered the agent a designer purse as a "gift" that he valued at \$400. He also told the agent that an accountant wanted \$5,000 to represent him during the IRS audit. Liou said he would rather give the agent the cash if she agreed to expedite the tax audit and "not be hard on him." The agent told TIGTA investigators about the offer.

During an electronically monitored meeting between Liou and the agent on July 26, 2005, Liou paid the agent \$5,000 in cash and asked that she "wrap up" the audit with results favorable to him. Liou cautioned her not to deposit the money in the bank and also gave the agent the purse.

Lockhart commended the TIGTA agents who investigated the case and Assistant U.S. Attorney Doug Squires who prosecuted the case.

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